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Pondera County
Conservation Needs
Committee

Pondera County
Soil and Water
Conservation Needs
Inventory

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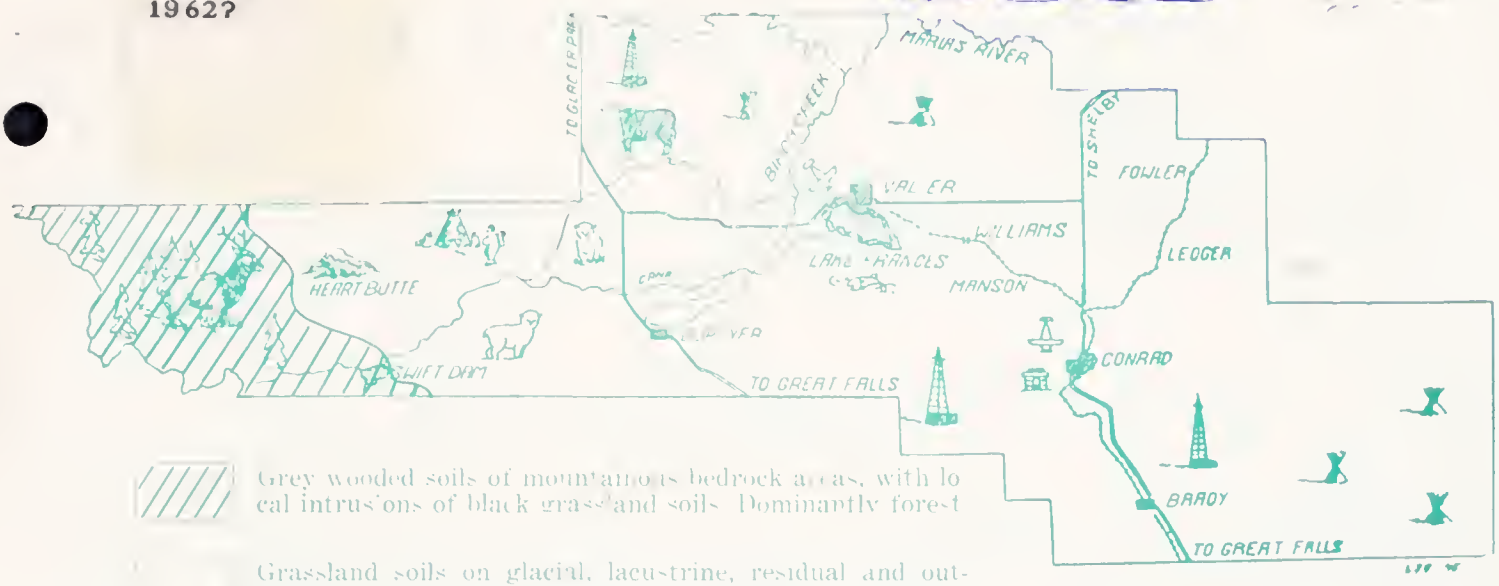

Pondera County
Soil and Water Conservation Needs Inventory

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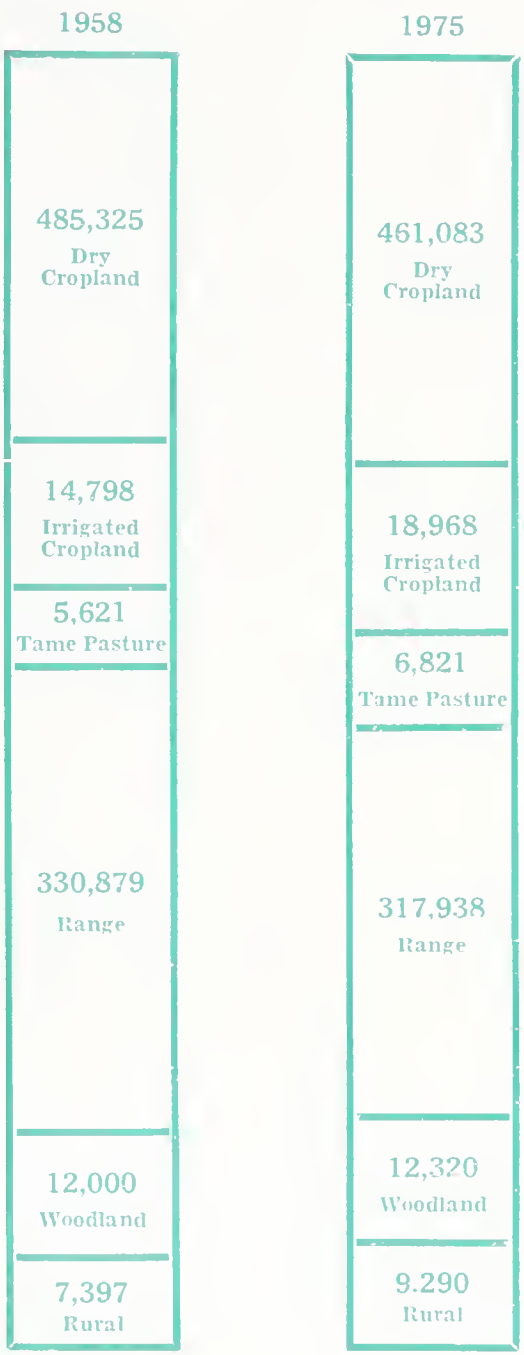
PLEASE RETURN

The FARMERS STATE BANK OF CONRAD *paid for the printing of this report.*

In Pondera County there are	1,051,520 Acres
The Area of Federal Land is	121,479 Acres
Towns, Roads, Water, etc. amount to	15,572 Acres
This leaves a Conservation Responsibility on	914,469 Acres

Land Use Today and Expected by 1975



Dry cropland will increase slightly. Marginal cropland will be reseeded to range and pasture.

Irrigated cropland will increase slightly. Some of the poorer land will be seeded to permanent pasture.

Tame pastures will increase.

Rangeland will decrease slightly. Marginal dry cropland will be reseeded to rangeland.

Woodland will increase slightly with the planting of farmstead and field windbreaks.

Non-agricultural use of rural land will increase. Highways, rural living and other public use will take more land.

Land Use Change by Capabilities

Land Capability Class	Land Use 1958	EXPECTED LAND USE CHANGES BY 1975						
		Cropland		Grassland		Woodland	Other	Out of Agric. Use
	Irrigated Cropland	Irrigated	Dry	Pasture	Range			
I	6,335	6,335						
II	35,732	35,172				60		200
III	12,545	12,345						200
IV	717	717						
VI	120	120						
	Dry Cropland							
II	12,691		12,111			15		175
III	367,030	3,000	359,610		3,000	210		1,180
IV	12,651		39,951	1,500	500			100
V	361		261	100				
VI	6,279		3,179	800	2,000			
VIII								
	Tame Pasture							
I	673	673						
II	4,429	557		3,862				
III	6,631			6,631				
IV	577			577				
VI	2,498			2,498				
	Range [illegible]							
I	1,955				1,655			
II	26,948	368	7,368		19,082	5		125
III	70,466		8,600	3,000	59,266			200
IV	10,964				11,334			30
V	10,727				10,727			
VI	124,551				123,926			125
VII	63,896				63,869			27
VIII	1,893						1,893	
	Woodland							
III	1,475					1,475		
IV	355					355		
VI	9,107					9,107		
VII	763					763		
	Other							
II	2,401						2,401	
III	1,679						1,679	
VIII	3,317						3,317	
TOTALS	914,169	89,587	161,083	18,968	324,759	12,320	9,290	2,662

EXPLANATION — The trend seems to be a trend of seeding poorer dry cropland to tame pasture or native range. Some of the better rangeland will be plowed for [illegible] both dry and irrigated cropland or seeded to tame pasture. Woodland — such as farmstead and field windbreaks will increase slightly. Some of nearly all land uses will go into such nonagricultural use as roads and urban development.

Watershed Inventory

WHAT WAS DONE

Disregarding county or other political divisions, the natural drainages were divided into 250,000 acres or less. Each subdivision was studied by the committee to determine treatment needs and possible developments which might be met through the small watershed program or by other kinds of group action.

WHAT IT REVEALED

Some flood damage has occurred on the Dry Fork, Pondera Creek and other creeks. Most of this flood damage has been to county roads and cropland along the flood plain. Also the city of Conrad received some flood damage to its south edge several times. There have been some sediment deposits, stream bank erosion and soil erosion on all the drainageways. Good range management and grassed waterways would help the erosion problems

"MAN IS LEARNING"

A study for a watershed development was made several years ago on the Pondera Creek drainage above Conrad and ten miles below. Easements from land owners for planned dam sites could not be obtained, therefore the watershed project was tabled.

The Problems and Needed Treatment

DRY CROPLAND — 161,083 Acres

59% or 271,418 acres adequately treated
41% needs treatment

a. Erosion is the dominant problem	238,000 acres
b. Unfavorable soil is dominant	31,296 acres
c. Unfavorable climatic conditions	1,862 acres

IRRIGATED CROPLAND — 89,587 Acres

30% or 27,026 acres are adequately treated
70% needs treatment

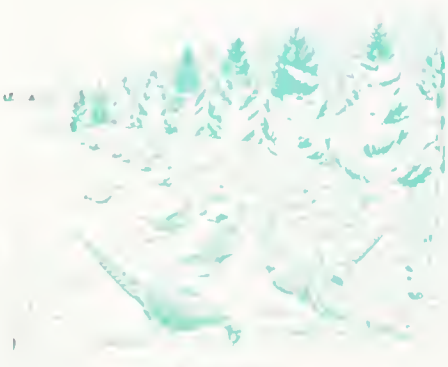
a. Erosion dominant	16,000 acres
b. Excess water is dominant	258 acres
c. Unfavorable soil	30,800 acres
d. Climatic conditions dominant problem	260 acres

WHICH SHALL IT BE ?

GRASSLAND — 343,727 Acres
(Range, Pasture, Irrigated Native)

40% or 138,936 acres are adequately treated
60% needs treatment

a. Needs reseeding	8,500 acres
b. Improvement	104,079 acres
c. Overgrazed	92,212 acres
d. Needs stockwater	41,985 acres
e. Erosion problem	20,000 acres
f. Protection from fire	80,000 acres
g. Encroachment of plants	13,500 acres
h. Excess water	10,727 acres
i. Need for water conservation	50,000 acres



WOODLAND — 12,320 Acres

a. Needs establishment	1,200 acres
b. Needs stand improvement	1,000 acres
c. Protection from fire	10,320 acres
d. Insect and disease control	12,320 acres
e. Protection from animals	1,000 acres
f. Erosion control	500 acres
g. Establishment of windbreaks (40 mi.)	320 acres

Land Capability Definition

SUITABLE FOR CULTIVATION				NOT SUITABLE FOR CULTIVATION			
CLASS I	CLASS II	CLASS III	CLASS IV	CLASS V	CLASS VI	CLASS VII	CLASS VIII
Very good land, no limitations	Good land, minor limitations	Moderately good land with major limitations	Fairly good land occasional cultivation with severe limitations	Suitable for pasture, range and woodland With no limitations	Suitable for pasture, range and woodland With minor limitations	Suitable for pasture, range and woodland With major limitations	Suitable for wildlife and watershed

Increasing Permanent Limitations ⟶

Some soils in Classes V and VI can be used for crops with unusually intensive management.

WHY THE INVENTORY — Although we are blessed with abundance, our resources are not inexhaustible. They must be cared for and used wisely that their productiveness will continue. To assure their wise use we need basic facts about physical problems of conservation, their magnitude, and relative urgency. This inventory contains basic facts. It will be modified and kept current with advances in technology and increased knowledge.

HOW IT WAS MADE — The inventory was initiated in 1957 as part of a national inventory authorized by the Secretary of Agriculture. It is based upon soil surveys of 160-acre samples drawn at random. The soil survey samples were expanded to represent actual conditions in the county. The county committee used this information along with their knowledge of the county to develop estimates of treatment changes by 1975.

WHO DID IT — The inventory and this leaflet were prepared by the Pondera County Conservation Needs Committee. The committee consisted of representatives of the County Extension Service, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation service, Farmers Home Administration, U. S. Forest Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs, County Commissioners, County Assessor, Soil Conservation District and the Soil Conservation Service, who acted as chairman.